

CLAIMS

1. A station for applying one or more substances to a substrate, of the type comprising at least one mobile printing bridge, characterised in that it comprises means to install and means to control, on said mobile printing bridge, an assembly for applying substances in screen printing mode or an assembly for applying substances in digital mode.
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2. A station for applying one or more substances according to claim 1, wherein said means to install said assemblies for screen printing or digital application of one or more substances comprise at least one pair of supporting elements to mount on said mobile printing bridge at least one doctor/doctor unit or at least one doctor/scraping unit of an assembly for applying one or more substances in screen printing mode, and to mount at least a bar to support a plurality of heads for applying one or more substances in digital mode.
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3. A station for applying one or more substances according to claim 1, wherein said means to alternatively control said assemblies for screen printing or digital application of one or more substances comprise a programmable control device to perform at least one of the following functions:
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 - data exchange under the form of signals with at least one general control unit associated with a machine to apply substances in which said station is installed;
 - movement of said mobile printing bridge;
 - movement of one or more mobile parts during operation in screen printing mode, and halting of said one or more mobile members during operation in digital mode; and
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 - control of the printing heads during operation in digital mode.
4. A station for applying one or more substances according to claim 1, wherein said assembly for digital application of one or more

substances comprises one or more heads for ink jet type printing.

5. A station for applying one or more substances according to claim 4, wherein said one or more heads for ink jet type printing are supplied with the same substance.

5 6. A station for applying one or more substances according to claim 1, wherein said assembly for digital application of one or more substances comprises a plurality of heads for ink jet type printing.

7. A station for applying one or more substances according to claim 6, wherein at least two of said heads for ink jet type printing are supplied with substances differing from one another.

10 8. A machine for applying substances to a substrate, of the type comprising a plurality of application stations arranged along a common production line, at least one unit for general control of said machine and means to transfer said substrate from one of said stations to another subsequent of said stations, characterised in that it comprises at least one station for applying one or more substances according to any one of the claims from 1 to 7.

15 9. A machine according to claim 8, wherein at least one of said stations is set for digital application of said one or more substances and comprises at least one printing bridge which is movable in a direction perpendicular to the progress direction of said substrate.

20 10. A machine according to claim 8, wherein at least one of said stations is set for digital application of said one or more substances and comprises at least one fixed printing bridge which extends perpendicularly in relation to the progress direction of said substrate.

25 11. A machine according to claim 8, wherein at least one of said stations is set for digital application of said one or more substances and comprises one or more heads for ink jet type printing.

12. A machine according to claim 11, wherein said one or more

heads for ink jet type printing are supplied with the same substance.

13. A machine according to claim 8, wherein at least one of said stations is set for digital application of said one or more substances and comprises a plurality of heads for ink jet type printing.

5 14. A machine according to claim 13, wherein at least two of said heads for ink jet type printing are supplied with substances differing from one another.

10 15. A machine according to claim 8, wherein at least one drying station of said substances is provided interposed between at least two of said stations for applying said one or more substance to said substrate.

15 16. A machine according to claim 8, wherein said means for transferring said substrate from one of said stations to another subsequent of said stations comprises at least one conveyor belt controlled by said general control unit.

17. A machine according to claim 8, wherein said means for transferring said substrate from one of said stations to another subsequent of said stations comprises gripping units associated with each of said stations and controlled by said general control unit.

20 18. A machine according to claim 8, wherein at least one of said stations is set for digital application of said one or more substances and at least another of said stations is set for screen printing application of said one or more substances.

25 19. A method for applying substances to a substrate, wherein said substances are applied to said substrate in a plurality of stations arranged along a common production line, characterised in that each of said stations is set for the application of one or more of said substances with the screen printing technique or with the digital technique.

20. A method according to claim 19, wherein one or more of said substances are applied by means of one or more heads for ink jet type printing.

21. A method according to claim 20, wherein one or more of said heads for ink jet type printing are supplied with the same substance.

22. A method according to claim 19, wherein one or more of said substances are applied by means of a plurality of heads for ink jet type printing.

23. A method according to claim 22, wherein at least two of said heads for ink jet type printing are supplied with different substances from one another.

24. A method according to claim 19, wherein said substrate is composed of a continuous sheet.

25. A method according to claim 19, wherein said substrate is composed of separate sheets.

26. A method according to claim 19, wherein at least one of said substances is applied to said substrate with the screen printing technique, and at least another of said substances is applied with the digital technique.